

## On some generic names amongst the *Bucconidae* (puffbirds)

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Rasmussen & Collar (2002) made several changes to the taxonomy and nomenclature of the *Bucconidae*. An important change occurred in their treatment of taxa formerly assigned to the genus *Bucco* Brisson, 1760 (as in Peters 1948, Howard & Moore 1980 and Dickinson 2003). They stated (p. 104): 'The most perplexing problem at the generic level involves the Collared Puffbird, which in bill shape and colour, as well as plumage pattern, is closer to species of *Nystalus* than to other members of an expanded genus *Bucco*. Since it is the type species of the genus and family, however, it cannot be removed from the genus *Bucco*. Resurrection of generic names in former widespread usage, until they were all placed in *Bucco* by J. L. Peters provides an interim solution to the problem, pending further study.'

Incidentally, P. L. Sclater (1891) placed all of these taxa in *Bucco*, long before Peters (1948). Nonetheless, Rasmussen & Collar's reasoning seems sound. As a result, *Bucco* becomes a monotypic genus, containing only Collared Puffbird *Bucco capensis* Linnaeus, 1766. Similarly, their removal to *Nystactes* Gloger, 1827, of Spotted Puffbird *Nystactes tamiata* (J. F. Gmelin, 1788), and Sooty-capped Puffbird *Nystactes noanamae* (Hellmayr, 1909), is uncontroversial.

However, in adopting *Argicus* Cabanis & Heine, 1863, *Museum Heineanum* 4(1): 148, for *Cyphos macrodactylus* von Spix, 1824, Rasmussen & Collar (2002) seem to have discarded another earlier available name: *Cyphos* von Spix, 1824, *Avium species novae, quas in itinere per Brasiliam annis 1817–20 collegit et descripsi*, 1: 51 (type, by monotypy, *Cyphos macrodactylus* von Spix, 1824). Peters (1948: 12) has recorded under *Argicus* Cabanis & Heine, in the synonymy of *Bucco* Brisson, that *Cyphos* von Spix, 1824, was a junior homonym of *Cyphus* Schönherr, 1823. But, under the Code's (ICZN 1999) one-letter-difference rule (Art. 56.2), *Cyphus* Schönherr, 1823, does not pre-occupy *Cyphos* von Spix, 1824. As *Argicus* Cabanis & Heine is hardly in widespread use, having apparently last been used by Chapman (1926) outside synonymies, *Cyphos* von Spix should replace it under the normal course of priority. Thus the scientific name of the Chestnut-capped Puffbird becomes *Cyphos macrodactylus* von Spix, 1824.

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## The gender of genera ending in *-oenas*

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Many avian genus-group names have been formed from the feminine Greek word οὐνάς [wild pigeon]. Some, like *Oena*, *Reinwardtoena* and *Turacoena*, are Latinised with a change of ending [-ας to -a], here indicative of the feminine gender (ICZN 1999, Art. 30.1.3) that is correctly reflected by current combinations (Peters 1937, Dickinson 2003).

Names ending in *-oenas* (this is not the transliterated *-oimas*, to be treated under Art. 30.1.2) are also Latinised, but this ending is *not* indicative of a particular gender under Art. 30.1.3. In such cases, the gender must be determined under Art. 30.1.4.2: a name that ends in *-oenas* is masculine unless its author, in the original work, stated that it is feminine or combined it with an adjectival species-group name in the feminine form.

Table 1 shows the grammatical gender of the generic names ending in *-oenas* that are to be encountered within Peters (1937), Wolters (1975) and Dickinson (2003). A considerable number of other avian generic names ending in *-oenas* are to be found as subgenera or junior synonyms in other works, but they are not treated here.

TABLE 1

Gender of generic names ending in *-oenas* as found in Peters (1937), Wolters (1975), and Dickinson (2003).

Genus-group name	Original combination	Gender
<i>Alectroenas</i> G. R. Gray, 1840	<i>A. franciae</i>	Masc.
<i>Alopecoenas</i> Sharpe, 1899	<i>A. hoedti</i>	Masc.
<i>Caloenas</i> G. R. Gray, 1840	<i>C. nicobarica</i>	Fem.
<i>Chloroenas</i> Reichenbach, 1853	<i>C. monilis</i>	Masc.
<i>Compsoenas</i> Riley, 1921	<i>C. radiata</i>	Fem.
<i>Coryphoenas</i> Wardlaw Ramsay, 1890	<i>C. crassirostris</i>	Masc.
<i>Janthoenas</i> Reichenbach, 1853	<i>J. janthina</i>	Fem.
<i>Lepidoenas</i> Reichenbach, 1853	<i>L. speciosa</i>	Fem.
<i>Lithoenas</i> Reichenbach, 1853	<i>L. livia</i>	Fem.
<i>Nesoenas</i> Salvadori, 1893	<i>N. mayeri</i>	Masc.
<i>Notioenas</i> Ridgway, 1915	No combination	Masc.
<i>Oenoenas</i> Salvadori, 1893	No combination	Masc.
<i>Patagioenas</i> Reichenbach, 1853	<i>P. leucocephala</i>	Fem.
<i>Starnoenas</i> Bonaparte, 1838	<i>S. cyanocephala</i>	Fem.
<i>Taenioenas</i> Reichenbach, 1853	<i>T. albitorques</i>	Masc.
<i>Zonoenas</i> Reichenbach, 1853	<i>Z. muelleri</i>	Masc.